

In Solidarity with Middlebury SJP

To President Laurie Patton and Middlebury College,

As alumni, employees, and students of Middlebury, we demand that Middlebury College break its silence and protect students on campus who are speaking out in support of Palestine.

Earlier this year, Kamli Faour (she/her), a Palestinian who co-formed Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) at Middlebury College, faced anti-Palestinian discrimination in response to her advocacy of Palestinian rights on campus. The College did little, if anything, to protect her from or fight against said discrimination, to the point where she felt it was too unsafe for her to be on campus, and considered leaving before the spring semester ended. Matt Martignoni (they/he), the Jewish co-founder of SJP, was informed by Chief Diversity Officer Miguel Fernandez (on Middlebury College's behalf) that their actions caused harm to Jewish students on campus, and was forced to change the SJP website and apologize for actions that were not actually antisemitic. A formal letter documenting these events written by Palestine Legal asked for a response from Middlebury by May 10; no response has been published by the school, and we are now sixteen days past the deadline.

In the wake of the Black Lives Matter protests last year, President Laurie Patton and Middlebury College administrators wrote to the community on their commitment to advancing anti-racist practice and initiatives. However, when Kamli was confronted with anti-Palestinian racism and threats, the College chose silence and continuously refused to take action on the matter, even after Kamli asked for support. If the College claims to uphold principles of anti-racism, it must meet the moral obligation of protecting Palestinian students in both words and actions. If Middlebury truly champions free expression and inclusiveness, this protection must extend to its Palestinian students as well.

Just as the organizations Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP) and Palestine Legal wrote, we hereby demand that President Laurie Patton and the Middlebury College administration:

1. Issue a public statement clearly and unequivocally stating that Students for Justice in Palestine has a right to exist on campus and that Middlebury will not tolerate anti-Palestinian harassment;
2. Apologize, in writing, for falsely accusing SJP's Jewish co-president of antisemitism;
3. Mandate a training for the Community Bias Response Team, the Chief Diversity Officer, and the Dean of Students on anti-Palestinian harassment and the Palestine exception to free speech with a group that advocates for Palestinian rights, such as JVP, US CPR, or another organization advocating for Palestinian rights;
4. Affirmatively recognize the right to advocate for Palestinian rights on campus and agree that the College will not adopt or enforce policies that limit speech supporting Palestinian rights.
5. Adopt measures to protect all Palestinian students who endure harassment, whether they be on or off campus.

In solidarity with Kamli, Matt, and the students of SJP,

*** Required**



How are you affiliated with Middlebury College? *

☐ Student

☐ Alumni

☐ Employee

☐ Other: _____

Please sign your name, class, and/or affiliation with the college *

Your answer

Next

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